



PATENT
Customer No. 58,982
Attorney Docket No. 08350.1488

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re Application of:)
)
Douglas C. MEYER) Group Art Unit: 3627
)
Application No.: 10/027,032) Examiner: Kramer, James
)
Filed: December 20, 2001)
)
For: METHOD OF MANAGING) Confirmation No.: 2259
INVENTORY)

Mail Stop Appeal Brief--Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF (37 C.F.R. 41.37)

Transmitted herewith is the APPEAL BRIEF in this application with respect to the
Notice of Appeal filed on March 1, 2006 and the Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-
Appeal Brief Review mailed April 20, 2006.

This application is on behalf of

☐ Small Entity ☒ Large Entity

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 41.20(b)(2), the fee for filing the Appeal Brief is:

☐ \$250.00 (Small Entity)

☒ \$500.00 (Large Entity)

TOTAL FEE DUE:

Appeal Brief Fee \$500.00

Extension Fee (if any) \$450.00

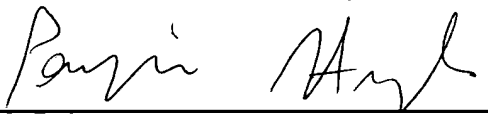
Total Fee Due \$950.00

☒ Enclosed is a check for \$950.00 to cover the above fees.

PETITION FOR EXTENSION. If any extension of time is necessary for the filing of this Appeal Brief, and such extension has not otherwise been requested, such an extension is hereby requested, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge necessary fees for such an extension to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916. A duplicate copy of this paper is enclosed for use in charging the deposit account.

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: July 20, 2006

By: 
Panyin A. Hughes
Reg. No. 55,288



PATENT
Customer No. 58,982
Attorney Docket No. 08350.1488-00000

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)	
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Douglas C. MEYER)	Group Art Unit: 3627
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Application No.: 10/027,032)	Examiner: Kramer, James
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For: METHOD OF MANAGING)	Confirmation No.: 2259
INVENTORY)	

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Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

APPEAL BRIEF UNDER BOARD RULE § 41.37

In support of the Notice of Appeal filed March 1, 2006, in response to the Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review mailed on April 20, 2006, and further to Board Rule 41.37, Appellant presents this brief and encloses herewith a check for the fee of \$500.00 required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c).

This Appeal Brief is being filed concurrently with a petition for an Extension of Time for Two months, and the appropriate fee.

This Appeal is in response to the final rejection of claims 1, 3-11, 32-37, and 39-52 in the Office Action mailed on October 12, 2005 and the Notice of the Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review mailed on April 20, 2006.

If any additional fees are required or if the enclosed payment is insufficient, Appellant requests that the required fees be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

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Real Party In Interest

Caterpillar Inc. is the real party in interest.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are currently no other appeals or interferences, of which Appellant, Appellant's legal representative, or Assignee are aware of, that will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

Status Of Claims

Claims 1 and 3-52 are pending in this application. Claims 12-31 and 38 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 3-11, 32-37, and 39-52 are rejected. The rejection of claims 1, 3-11, 32-37, and 39-52 is appealed. A copy of these rejected claims is provided in the Claims Appendix attached to this Appeal Brief.

Status Of Amendments

No amendments to the claims have been filed subsequent to the final rejection of claims 1, 3-11, 32-37, and 39-52 mailed on October 12, 2005.

Summary Of Claimed Subject Matter

The invention relates generally to a method for managing inventory at a facility, and more particularly, to a method for maintaining and enhancing the accuracy of inventory records.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a method of improving records of inventory at a facility. See, for example, specification at page 3, paragraph no. 16, and Fig. 1. The method includes assessing a plurality of current computer based inventory records associated with the facility. See, for example, specification at page 3, paragraph no. 17, and Fig. 1. The method also includes responsively identifying at least one discrepancy in at least one of the current inventory records. See, for example, specification at page 3, paragraph no. 17, and Fig. 1. The method further includes identifying at least one inventory process associated with said discrepancy. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 19, and Fig. 1. The method further includes establishing a desired performance metric associated with said process. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21. The method also includes establishing an actual performance metric of said process in response to said discrepancy. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21. The method further includes comparing said actual and desired performance metrics. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21. The method further includes establishing a plan to correct the at least one discrepancy in response to said comparison, the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process.

See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21, page 7, paragraph 43. The method also includes implementing the change to correct the at least one discrepancy.

See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21.

Independent claim 37 is directed to a method of improving records of inventory at a facility. See, for example, specification at page 3, paragraph no. 16, and Fig. 1. The method includes assessing at least one inventory record associated with the facility, said record being associated with a claim received from an external party, such claim being associated with a part shipment, where said part is of a part type and is associated with said inventory. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45. The method also includes identifying an inventory associated with said facility, said inventory including one of an actual inventory and an estimated inventory. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45. The method further includes comparing said at least one inventory record and said facility inventory. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45. The method also includes identifying at least one discrepancy in the inventory record in response to said comparison. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45. The method further includes analyzing said claim. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45. The method also includes changing an inventory practice in response to said record discrepancy and said analysis, the change including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21, page 7, paragraph 43, page 8, paragraph no. 45.

Independent claim 52 is directed to a method of improving records of inventory at a facility. See, for example, specification at page 3, paragraph no. 16, and Fig. 1. The method includes receiving a claim from an external party, such claim being associated with a part shipment, where said part is of a part type and is associated with said inventory. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45 and page 9, paragraph 46. The method also includes assessing a plurality of current computer based inventory records associated with the facility in response to said claim. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45 and page 9, paragraph 46. The method further includes responsively identifying at least one discrepancy in at least one of the current inventory records. See, for example, specification at page 3, paragraph no. 17, page 8, paragraph no. 45, page 9, paragraph 46, and Fig. 1. The method further includes analyzing said claim. See, for example, specification at page 8, paragraph no. 45 and page 9, paragraph 46. The method further includes establishing a plan to correct the at least one discrepancy in response to said assessment, the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21, page 7, paragraph 43, page 8, paragraph no. 45. The method also includes implementing the change to correct the at least one discrepancy. See, for example, specification at page 4, paragraph no. 21, page 7, paragraph 43, page 8, paragraph no. 45.

Grounds of Rejection

A. Claims 1, 3-10, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 44-49, and 52 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,884,300 to Brockman ("Brockman") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,785,361 to Mahon et al ("Mahon").

B. Claims 11, 42, 43, 50, and 51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of *Official Notice*.

C. Claim 34, 35, 40, and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0072977 to Hoblit et al. ("Hoblit").

Argument

A. The rejection of claims 1, 3-10, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 44-49, and 52 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of Mahon should be withdrawn

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-10, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 44-49, and 52 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of Mahon. A *prima facie* case of obviousness requires that the prior art references, when combined, must teach or suggest every aspect of the claims. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991); see also M.P.E.P. § 2143. The Board should reverse this rejection because Brockman and Mahon, either alone or in combination, do not teach every element of claims 1, 3-10, 32, 33, 36, 37, 39, 44-49, and 52.

Appellant respectfully asserts that neither Brockman nor Mahon either alone or in combination disclose or suggest the claimed invention. For example, claim 1 recites, among other aspects, “establishing a plan . . . the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process; and implementing the change to correct the at least one discrepancy.” Brockman does not disclose at least this aspect of claim 1. The Office Action concedes that Brockman does not disclose this element, stating: “Brockman fails to disclose the most recent changes related to adding, modifying, or deleting inventory processes and claims submitted by an external party.” Final Office Action, mailed October 12, 2005 at page 4. The Office Action relies on Mahon to modify Brockman, stating “Mahon discloses adding, modifying, or deleting

processes based on a problem identified by an external party (see column 3, line 61 - column 4, line 20).” *Id.* The Office Action then concludes that “[i]t would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Brockman with process changes as taught by Mahon, because process changes are tools used by management to correct problems and reduce potential future errors.” *Id.*

Appellant submits that like Brockman, Mahon too fails to disclose or suggest “establishing a plan . . . the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process,” as recited in claim 1 (emphasis added). Mahon is not related to inventory management. Instead, Mahon discloses “a system and method for ensuring the quality of a performance measurement in a telecommunications network.” Mahon, col. 3, lines 23-25. Mahon further discloses that “the present invention allows the user to perform a process to ensure the accuracy of the SQM reports,” adding that “[t]he process includes assessing the PMDW [Performance Measurement Data Warehouse], identifying sub-processes within the PMP [Performance Measurement Process], identifying audit points within the sub-processes and implementing quality control measures corresponding to the audit points.” Mahon, col 3, lines 60-66. Mahon also discloses a change control process that includes “identifying a business requirement and documenting the business requirement.” Mahon, col. 4, lines 1-4. Nowhere does Mahon disclose or suggest “establishing a plan . . . the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process.” Indeed, Mahon does not even mention adding, modifying or deleting inventory processes.

When this argument was raised pre-appeal, the Examiner stated that “the cited portions of Mahon relied up[on] by Examiner McCellan in the final Office Action submitted 10/12/05 are general teachings associated with management and methods of doing business.” Advisory Action dated February 8, 2006. Appellant respectfully disagrees and asserts that the portions of Mahon relied upon by the Examiner are specifically related to management of a telecommunications network, which is substantially different than an inventory process.

Further, the Office Action supplies no motivation why one of ordinary skill in the art would modify Brockman, which deals with an inventory model and supporting process, by looking to a system and method for ensuring quality of a performance of a telecommunication network. Nor has the Office Action supplied any teaching in Mahon that would motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Brockman with the teachings of Mahon as suggested by the Examiner.

It is clear that determinations of obviousness must be supported by evidence on the record. See Request for Consideration at page 4. Furthermore, the prior art must suggest the desirability of the combination. *Id.* at 5. In this case, the Examiner has not shown by “clear and particular evidence” that a skilled artisan considering Mahon, and not having the benefit of Appellant’s disclosure, would have modified Brockman in a manner resulting in the method defined by claim 1. Appellant submits that the Examiner is impermissibly using teachings of the present application in hindsight to suggest that claim limitations of the present application would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art in view of Mahon. Such use of impermissible hindsight in concluding obviousness is prohibited. See M.P.E.P. § 2142. Therefore, Appellant submits that

there is no motivation for one skilled in the art of inventory management to look to the teachings of process changes allegedly suggested or disclosed in Mahon to modify Brockman so as to render claim 1 obvious.

Mahon is not related to a method for improving inventory management. Thus, it reasonably follows that Mahon does not disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned recitations of claim 1 related to a method of improving records of inventory at a facility. It also reasonably follows that Mahon cannot, and indeed does not, suggest a modification to Brockman to perform the above-mentioned claim recitations. Indeed, nothing even approaching inventory management related language (e.g., adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, deleting an inventory process, etc.) is present in Mahon. Appellant submits that the section 103(a) rejection of claim 1 is improper and respectfully requests its reversal.

With respect to independent claim 37, Brockman and Mahon, either alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest "changing an inventory practice . . . the change including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process." The Office Action agrees that Mahon fails to disclose or suggest "adding, modifying, or deleting inventory processes." Final Office Action, mailed October 12, 2005 at page 4. Nevertheless, the Office Action contends that Mahon discloses "adding, modifying, or deleting processes." *Id.* As fully developed above, Mahon does not even disclose or suggest adding, modifying or deleting a process, much more disclose adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process. In fact Mahon does not mention "inventory" anywhere in its disclosure. The Examiner agrees, but relies on Mahon for "general

teachings associated with management and methods of doing business.” See Advisory Action dated February 8, 2006. Such generalizations are improper. Further, Appellant is unclear as to how “general teachings associated with management and methods of doing business,” disclose or suggest “changing an inventory practice . . . the change including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process,” as recited in independent claim 37. Accordingly, Appellant respectfully requests withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection against claim 37 and its dependents.

Regarding independent claim 52, neither Brockman nor Mahon either alone or in combination disclose or suggest “establishing a plan . . . the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process.” As noted above, Mahon does not even mention “inventory,” and further fails to disclose adding, modifying or deleting a process. Given that Brockman too fails to disclose or suggest adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process, neither Brockman nor Mahon, either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the limitation recited in independent claim 52. Thus, Appellant requests withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection against claim 52.

B. The rejection of claims 11, 42, 43, 50, and 51 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of Official Notice should be withdrawn

Claims 11, 42, 43, 50, and 51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of *Official Notice*. A *prima facie* case of obviousness requires that the prior art references, when combined, must teach or suggest every aspect of the claims. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991); see also M.P.E.P. § 2143. The Board should reverse this rejection because Brockman and the *Official Notice*, either alone or in combination, do not teach every element of claims 11, 42, 43, 50, and 51.

Appellant submits that the various official notices taken by the final Office Action do not remedy the shortcomings regarding Brockman and Mahon discussed above. See Final Office Action, pages 4-5. Specifically, with regard to claims 11 and 43, which depend ultimately from claim 1, Bragg, relied on for its alleged disclosure of the knowledge to extrapolate total inventory data based on a predetermine sample (final Office Action at page 4, paragraph 5) and to identify and recover lost inventory in response to a discrepancy (Office Action, at page 5) fails to cure the deficiency of Brockman and Mahon. With regard to claim 42, which ultimately depends from claim 37, Dobler, relied on for its alleged disclosure of the knowledge to relocate problem prone parts (Office Action, at page 5), fails to cure the deficiency of Brockman and Mahon. With regard to claims 50 and 51, which ultimately depend from claim 1, Takao, relied on for its alleged disclosure of measuring customer credibility (Office Action, at page 6), also fails to cure the deficiency of Brockman and Mahon. Moreover, claims 11,

43, 50, and 51 are allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable, and claim 42 is allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 37 is allowable.

Further, as noted above, each of the rejected claims depends from one of claims 1 and 37. As acknowledged in the Final Office Action, Brockman does not disclose each and every limitation of claims 1 and 37. Final Office Action at page 4. The *Official Notice* taken by the Examiner also does not address the admitted deficiencies of Brockman with respect to claims 1 and 37. Thus a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

C. The rejection of claims 34, 35, 40, and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of Hoblit should be withdrawn

Claims 34, 35, 40, and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brockman in view of Hoblit. A *prima facie* case of obviousness requires that the prior art references, when combined, must teach or suggest every aspect of the claims. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991); see also M.P.E.P. § 2143. The Board should reverse the rejection because Brockman in combination with Hoblit does not teach every element of claims 34, 35, 40, and 41

Claims 34 and 35 depend from claim 1. Claims 40 and 41 depend from claim 37. As acknowledged in the Final Office Action on page 4, Brockman does not disclose each and every limitation of claims 1 and 37. The Office Action does not assert that Hoblit remedies the admitted deficiencies of Brockman with regard to claims 1 and 37. Instead, Hoblit was relied on for discussing “[a] method, computer program product and system for analyzing inventory information using time frames.” Hoblit, Abstract. Thus,

as the admitted deficiency of Brockman has not been remedied, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established. Moreover, claims 34 and 35 depend from independent claim 1, and claims 40 and 41 depend from independent claim 37 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons that claims 1 and 37 are allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Conclusion


For the reasons given above, pending claims 1, 3-11, 32-37, and 39-52 are allowable, and reversal of the Examiner's rejection is respectfully requested.

To the extent any extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is required to obtain entry of this Appeal Brief, such extension is hereby respectfully requested. If there are any fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 which are not enclosed herewith, including any fees required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: July 20, 2006

By: 
Panyin A. Hughes
Reg. No. 55,288

Claims Appendix to Appeal Brief Under Rule 41.37(c)(1)(viii)

1. (Previously Presented) A method of improving records of inventory at a facility, comprising:

assessing a plurality of current computer based inventory records associated with the facility;

responsively identifying at least one discrepancy in at least one of the current inventory records;

identifying at least one inventory process associated with said discrepancy;

establishing a desired performance metric associated with said process;

establishing an actual performance metric of said process in response to said discrepancy,

comparing said actual and desired performance metrics;

establishing a plan to correct the at least one discrepancy in response to said comparison, the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process; and

implementing the change to correct the at least one discrepancy.

3. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 1, further including a step of modifying at least one characteristic associated with at least one inventory

record, the step including one of adjusting and adding the at least one characteristic to the at least one inventory record.

4. (Original) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of establishing a plan includes the step of reviewing an inventory process of the facility.

5. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 4, wherein the plan further includes the step of improving an inventory practice.

6. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in claim 4, wherein the plan further includes the step of improving an inventory methodology.

7. (Original) A method, as set forth in claim 4, wherein the inventory process is a receiving process.

8. (Original) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of assessing current inventory records includes the step of performing a warehouse audit.

9. (Original) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of assessing current inventory records includes the step of performing a location audit.

10. (Original) A method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the step of assessing current inventory records includes the step of performing a statistical test count.

11. (Original) A method, as set forth in claim 10, wherein the step of performing a statistical test count includes the steps of:

defining a population of inventory items to count, the population of inventory items to count being less than a total number of inventory items;

counting the population of inventory items;

comparing the count with an inventory record; and,

extrapolating the comparison to the total number of inventory items to achieve an inventory count.

32. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a claim from an external party, such claim being associated with a part shipment, where said part is of a part type and is associated with said inventory; and

analyzing said claim;

wherein the step of establishing said plan further comprises the step of establishing said plan to correct the at least one deficiency in response to said claim analysis.

33. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 32, wherein the step of analyzing said claim further comprises the step of identifying a characteristic of a part in said inventory in response to said analysis.

34. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 33, wherein said characteristic includes at least one of a problem prone part, and a theft prone part.

35. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 34, further comprising the step of reorganizing at least a portion of said inventory in response to said problem prone part identification.

36. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the step of assessing said plurality of inventory records, further includes the computer based steps of:

identifying a current inventory record associated with said inventory;

performing a statistical test count associated with said inventory; and

comparing said current inventory record and said statistical test count;

wherein the step of identifying said at least one discrepancy further includes the step of identifying said discrepancy in response to said comparison.

37. (Previously Presented) A method of improving records of inventory at a facility, comprising:

assessing at least one inventory record associated with the facility, said record being associated with a claim received from an external party, such claim being associated with a part shipment, where said part is of a part type and is associated with said inventory;

identifying an inventory associated with said facility, said inventory including one of an actual inventory and an estimated inventory;

comparing said at least one inventory record and said facility inventory;

identifying at least one discrepancy in the inventory record in response to said comparison;

analyzing said claim and;

changing an inventory practice in response to said record discrepancy and said analysis, the change including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process.

39. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 37, wherein the step of analyzing said claim further comprises the step of establishing a characteristic of a part in said inventory in response to said analysis.

40. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 39, wherein said characteristic includes at least one of a problem prone part, and a theft prone part.

41. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 40, further comprising the step of reorganizing at least a portion of said inventory in response to said problem prone part identification.

42. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 41, wherein the step of reorganizing at least a portion of said inventory includes the step of relocating said part type in inventory in response to said claim analysis.

43. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 1, further comprising the step of identifying and recovering lost inventory in response to said at least one discrepancy.

44. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 32, wherein the step of analyzing said claim further comprises the step of analyzing said claim in response to a characteristic of a said part.

45. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 44, wherein said characteristic includes at least one of a part labeling, a part packaging.

46. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 44, wherein said characteristic includes a part location in inventory.

47. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 32, wherein said claim is associated with an error in a part quantity shipped, and wherein said claim analysis includes the steps of:

comparing said quantity error with a part quantity in a part package; and
resolving said error in response to said comparison.

48. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 32, wherein said claim is associated with an error in a type of part actually shipped, and wherein said claim analysis includes the steps of:

establishing an inventory location of said actually shipped part;

establishing an inventory location of a desired shipped part;

comparing said actual and desired shipped part locations; and

resolving said error in response to said location.

49. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 32, wherein said claim is associated with an error in a type of part actually shipped, and wherein said claim analysis includes the steps of:

establishing an inventory location of said actually shipped part;

establishing an inventory location of a desired shipped part; and

comparing said actual and desired shipped part locations.

50. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 49, wherein the step of establishing said plan, further comprises the step of establishing said plan in response to said comparison, said plan further including changing an inventory location of one of said actual and desired shipped part.

51. (Previously Presented) A method, as set forth in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a claim from an external party, such claim being associated with a part shipment, where said part is of a party type and is associated with said inventory, said claim being associated with a claimant;

analyzing said claim in response to a claim history of said claimant; and

accepting or rejecting said claim in response to said analysis.

52. (Previously Presented) A method of improving records of inventory at a facility, comprising:

receiving a claim from an external party, such claim being associated with a part shipment, where said part is of a part type and is associated with said inventory;

assessing a plurality of current computer based inventory records associated with the facility in response to said claim;

responsively identifying at least one discrepancy in at least one of the current inventory records;

analyzing said claim; and

establishing a plan to correct the at least one discrepancy in response to said assessment, the plan including a change to current inventory practices including one or more of adding an inventory process, modifying an inventory process, or deleting an inventory process; and

implementing the change to correct the at least one discrepancy.

Evidence Appendix

None.

Related Proceedings Appendix

None.